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Serial No.: 10/718,756

-2-

Art Unit: 1723

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A membrane filtration system for connecting a filter submodule comprising one or more elongate bundles of semipermeable polymeric fibers, said system comprising:
 - a housing;
 - at least one submodule comprising an elongate bundle of semipermeable polymeric fibers attached to a connecting sleeve having a locking formation;
 - at least one submodule connecting collar connected with said housing, said collar constructed and arranged to receive and locate the connecting sleeve, said collar releasably secured to the sleeve at an end by a snap clip adapted to engage both said collar and said locking formation and at least in part surround both said collar and said locking formation to prevent axial withdrawal of said submodule from said collar, wherein the clip is resiliently biased to enable radial contraction of the clip when the clip slidingly engages with the submodule and the collar and wherein the clip is cylindrical having a side wall having a top and bottom and a split to define opposed wall edges, the clip further comprising a top radially inwardly directed circumferential flange adjacent the top of said side wall for bearing engagement with said locking formation on said sleeve and the clip further comprising projections on said side wall adjacent respective said opposed edges, wherein said projections extend longitudinally from said top flange.
2. (Previously presented) The manifold according to claim 1, wherein said housing is in fluid communication with said collar.

Serial No.: 10/718,756

-3-

Art Unit: 1723

3. (Previously presented) The manifold according to claim 1, wherein said collar has an internal stepped seat for bearing engagement with said end of said submodule.

4. (Previously presented) The manifold according to claim 1, wherein said locking formation comprises a radially outwardly directed circumferential flange formed on said sleeve.

5-6. (Canceled).

7. (Previously presented) The manifold according to claim 1, wherein said side wall comprises a bottom radially inwardly directed circumferential flange at or adjacent the bottom of said side wall for bearing engagement with a complementary step on said collar.

8-33. (Canceled).

34. (Previously presented) The manifold according to claim 1, comprising four submodule connecting collars.

35. (Previously presented) The manifold according to claim 34, wherein said collars are disposed in a common plane and have parallel axes.

36. (Currently amended) A membrane filtration system comprising:

a first housing;

a plurality of submodules, wherein each submodule comprises:

an elongate bundle of fibers; and

a first connecting sleeve positioned about the bundle of fibers at one end of the bundle of fibers, wherein the sleeve comprises a locking formation;

a plurality of first collars attached to the first housing, wherein each of the plurality of first collars is constructed and arranged to receive and locate the first connecting sleeve of one of the plurality of submodules; and

Serial No.: 10/718,756

-4-

Art Unit: 1723

a plurality of resiliently biased snap clips, wherein each clip of the ~~clips~~ comprises a sidewall having a split to define opposed wall edges, and wherein each clip of the ~~plurality of clips~~ is releasably connected to one of the plurality of first collars and the locking formation of the first connecting sleeve of one of the plurality of submodules.

37. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 36, wherein the clips are releasably connected to one of the plurality of first collars and the first connecting sleeve of one of the plurality of submodules by a snap fit.

38. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 37, wherein each of the plurality of submodules further comprises a second connecting sleeve positioned about the bundle of fibers at an end of the bundle of fibers opposite the first connecting sleeve.

39. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 38, further comprising:
a second housing; and
a plurality of second collars attached to the second housing wherein each of the plurality of second collars is constructed and arranged to receive the second connecting sleeve of one of the plurality of submodules;

40. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 36, further comprising a filtrate conduit fluidly connected to the first housing.

41. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 37, further comprising a cleaning fluid conduit fluidly connected to the second housing.

42. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 41, wherein the cleaning fluid conduit is positioned between two pairs of second collars.

43. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 36, wherein the submodules are arranged in an upright position.

Serial No.: 10/718,756

-5-

Art Unit: 1723

44. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 36, wherein four first collars are attached to the first housing.

45. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 36, further comprising an open feed tank.

46. (Previously presented) The membrane filtration system of claim 39, further comprising a fluid tight cap attached to the second housing.

47. (New) The membrane filtration system of claim 1, wherein the clip is cylindrical having a side wall having a top and bottom and a split to define opposed wall edges. The clip further comprising a top radially inwardly directed circumferential flange adjacent the top of said wide wall for gearing engagement with said locking formation on said sleeve.

48. (New) The membrane filtration system of claim 47, wherein the clip further comprises projections on said side wall adjacent respective side opposed edges, wherein said projections extend longitudinally from said top flange.